

Fig. 14 is a view illustrating a number of different cutting tips usable with the flexible drill;

Figs. 15 and 16 are schematic views illustrating the provision of a plurality of separately inflatable bladders as a guide mechanism for a flexible structure and the operation of a guidance system for locating the tip of the flexible structure;

Figs. 17^A and 17^B are schematic views illustrating the forming of harvested tissue fragments into a compressed plug suitable for implantation;

Fig. 18 is a schematic view illustrating the implantation of harvested bone fragments using a polymeric mesh as a retainer; and

Figs. 19^A and 19^B are schematic views illustrating the implantation of harvested tissue fragments using a formable polymeric sealant as a retainer.

Description of Preferred Embodiments

The present invention is described herein with reference to a percutaneous bone removal and harvesting apparatus and method. It should be understood that the present invention is not limited to the removal of bone tissue, but is useful in the removal of any hard or soft tissue in the body such as excess, unwanted, or tumorous tissue or tissue used for reimplantation or grating.

A percutaneous bone removal apparatus 10 (Fig. 1) in accordance with the present invention includes a flexible drill 12. The flexible drill 12 has a flexible shaft 14

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